



NTSB National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Marine Safety

The Decision to Cross the Bar



The Decision to Cross the Bar

- Factors influencing the decision
- How the decision was made

Influencing Factors

- Situational
- Vessel
- Personal

Situational

- Marine forecast
- Restricted bar
- Visible high waves
- Other vessels
- Transmissions

Rough Seas



Vessel

- Size
- Power
- Previous crossings

Personal

- Successful crossing experience
- Familiar with vessels and their masters
- Owned two of the four vessels
- Specifically requested by charter group members

Steps/Actions

- Obtained weather/bar forecasts
- Decided against setting out crab pots
- Left dock with passengers
- Transited to the end of the inlet

Steps/Actions

- Observed seas and actions of other vessels
- Heard marine radio transmissions
- Attempted to cross after the *D & D*

To Cross or Not to Cross

PRO

- Previous crossings successful
- Other vessels crossed
- Passenger considerations

CON

- Waves/swells > 10 feet
- Seas unpredictable
- Warnings from other vessels

Context

- Dynamic conditions
- Considerable data
- Conflicting information
- Single decision-maker
- Limited time
- Potentially catastrophic consequences

Critical Factors

- Significance of *D* & *D*
- Difficulty of being lone decision-maker

Summary

- Poor predictability
- Limited margin of error
- Wrong cues
- Luck

Decision Making in This Accident



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